

The sequel to the **best-selling** *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*

25 *MORE*

BRIDGE CONVENTIONS

YOU

SHOULD KNOW

BARBARA SEAGRAM & DAVID BIRD





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To Justin, our first grandchild, with love. *Barbara Seagram*

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

What is your attitude to conventions? ‘Let’s put as many as possible on our convention card. They’re fun to play and make us look like real experts!’? Perhaps so, but playing a new convention is not as simple as putting another golf club in your bag, though. You have to make sure that your total bidding system covers, as well as possible, all the hands on which you will want to make a bid. Whenever you decide to use some particular bid in a conventional way, you must be certain that you can afford to abandon the natural use of this bid. For example, players readily took up the Stayman convention because they could see that a weak takeout into clubs (in the sequence 1NT – 2♣) was not much use, while being able to locate a 4-4 major-suit fit was really valuable.

As we describe each convention in this book, we will make it clear what you are giving up by abandoning the natural use of the bid. We will also mention the situations where one convention in the book conflicts with another. In short, our intention has been to provide you with all the information you need to decide whether or not to play the conventions we cover here. They are all popular conventions, many with a huge following around the world. Nevertheless, it is up to you to decide which of them will fit neatly into your own system.

In case you are unfamiliar with some of the terms used in bridge books, LHO is short for your left-hand opponent, the player sitting on your left. Similarly RHO is short for right-hand opponent. HCP means high-card points, on the traditional 4/3/2/1 scale. When instead we say ‘points’, we mean that you should add your distributional points to the total. We make no reference to the need to alert certain conventional bids in duplicate competition. That’s because the rules differ from country to country, and even from club to club; the authorities also tend to modify them at three-monthly intervals! It will be up to you to find out which ones require an alert when you play.

This book leans heavily on its best-selling predecessor *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know*. Rather than replicate information from that book, we will refer to it whenever necessary. For example, when we describe minor-suit transfers opposite 1NT, we will refer you to the first book for information on major-suit transfers.

Let the instruction and entertainment commence, then! We hope that you enjoy the book and that the conventions you choose to adopt will work well for you at the table.

Barbara Seagram and David Bird



FOREWORD

In the early 1980s, I was a teenager who had fallen in love. My love was the game of bridge and I spent a great deal of time pursuing her at Kate Buckman's Bridge Studio, the foremost bridge club in my home city of Toronto. Like almost all new bridge players, I eagerly tried to learn as many bidding conventions as possible.

What a mistake! Learning a lot of conventions was a mistake because I did not learn about them properly. It took me over ten years to unlearn some of the bad habits that I had picked up.

When most bridge players (and I was not an exception) learn a new convention, all they concern themselves with is the basic mechanics of how that convention works. Follow-up auctions, why a convention is used, when a convention should be used (and not used) are all vital issues that are blissfully ignored by most students of our game. I learned these lessons the hard way, but thanks to this book, you don't have to!

Barbara Seagram, who managed Kate Buckman's when I played there, already had a well-deserved reputation as one of the best bridge teachers in the city. Now, twenty years later, she is widely recognized as one of North America's premier bridge teachers. She has teamed up with David Bird, one of the most popular and prolific bridge writers in the world, to produce this sensational book. Barbara's skill as a teacher combined with David's talents for writing about the game make them an ideal partnership.

This book carries on where Barbara's award-winning *25 Bridge Conventions You Should Know* left off, this time presenting a set of popular and effective conventions suitable for intermediate level players. You may have heard of most of these conventions before and you probably use some of them yourself already, but I am willing to bet that even seasoned tournament players will find a lot of food for thought in these pages.

This book has everything that a book on conventions should have – detailed explanations of the conventions themselves (many with variations), why these conventions are useful, when they should be used, example deals from major tournaments, and plenty of quizzes.

I only wish that Barbara and David had been writing books about conventions when I was an intermediate level player!

Fred Gitelman

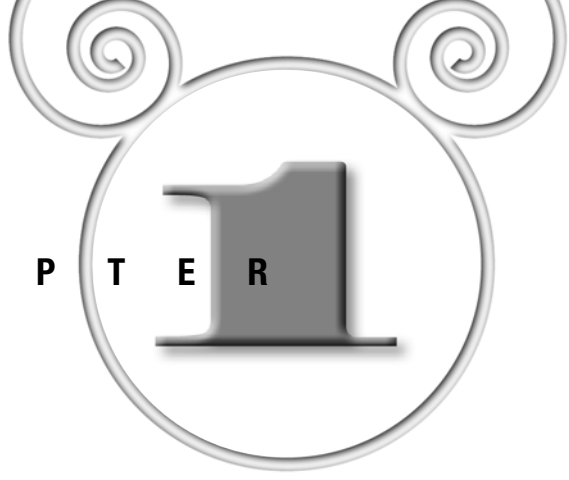


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**LEARN THESE
FIRST**



C H A P T E R



CAPPELLETTI DEFENSE TO 1NT

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

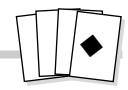
♥ The popular Cappelletti Defense to a 1NT opening was invented by **Michael Cappelletti**. Not to be confused with his son Mike Jr. (also a well-known bridge expert), the elder Cappelletti is a leading authority on Omaha poker.

When you are deciding whether to enter the bidding against an opposing 1NT opening, does it make much difference if the 1NT is weak or strong? It sure does! When the opening is weak (12-14 points), you may well be able to make game your way. This is rarely the case against a strong 1NT. The other difference is that against a weak 1NT, most people consider it essential to have a penalty double available. Against a strong 1NT it is largely a waste of time to use a double for penalties (even if the double is based on a good suit to run, the opponents can usually escape into a long suit of their own.

In this chapter we will look at the Cappelletti Defense to 1NT. This does include a penalty double and is therefore particularly recommended for use against a weak 1NT. In Chapter 7 we will describe the D.O.N.T. defense to the strong 1NT. If you do not

BY THE WAY

The Cappelletti convention is known as 'Hamilton' west of the Mississippi, and as 'Pottage' in the UK. It must be a good convention if three different people invented it independently!



want to play two different defenses, there is nothing at all wrong with playing Cappelletti against both the strong and weak notrump. That is exactly what a vast number of players do.

So what is Cappelletti?

These are the two situations where you may want to enter the auction over a 1NT opening – second seat and fourth seat:

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1NT	?

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
1NT	pass	pass	?

Here are the bids that Cappelletti offers. In both the second and fourth seats you may choose between these actions:

- dbl for penalties
- 2♣ a single-suiter in any of the four suits
- 2♦ both major suits
- 2♥ hearts and an undisclosed minor
- 2♠ spades and an undisclosed minor
- 2NT both minor suits

When you bid 2♦, 2♥ or 2♠ your two-suiter may be 4-5 or 5-4. This is a common feature of all defenses to 1NT that describe two-suited hands. As responder, you may sometimes have to guess which suit to choose. There is no need to worry about this. The situation is just the same as when you have to choose which suit to bid facing a takeout double. The 2NT overcall carries the bidding higher and should be based on a hand that is at least 5-5 in the minor suits.

What is the expected point range for the five bids between 2♣ and 2NT? When you hold 15 points or more against a weak 1NT, you will usually begin with a penalty double. The range for the Cappelletti bids is therefore about 9-14 points.

This is a typical hand on which you would make a Cappelletti 2♣ bid:

♠ 10 3 ♥ K Q 10 7 5 2 ♦ 9 5 ♣ K J 3

LHO	Partner	RHO	You
		1NT	?

You overcall with 2♣, showing a single-suiter somewhere. Partner will usually respond 2♦, asking you which suit you hold, and here you will rebid 2♥. If instead you held six diamonds, you would pass.